



## **Superior Court of California County of Riverside**

4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501

### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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electronic version available at: <http://riverside.courts.ca.gov/media/media.shtml>

### ***BILL TO PROVIDE INLAND EMPIRE WITH MORE JUDGES DIES IN COMMITTEE***

#### **RIVERSIDE COUNTY:**

An important bill, introduced by Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson of the 19<sup>th</sup> District, which would have provided the Inland Empire with additional judges, died in committee last month.

Senate Bill 1190 (SB 1190) would have provided funding for 50 judges statewide, judges that were allocated in 2007 but never funded so those additional resources were never provided to the state courts. Once funded, the bill would have provided nine additional judges each to the Riverside and San Bernardino Superior Court benches.

Lastly, the bill would have authorized an additional 50 judges statewide, dependent on future funding. The judges would be allocated to the various superior courts pursuant to uniform criteria approved by the Judicial Council, the governing body of the state courts, and based on current workload measures – a significantly important component of allocation.

According to the Judicial Council's 2012 update of the Judicial Needs Assessment, Riverside County Superior Court has a verified need for 138 judges. With only 76 judicial officers, the court needs an additional 62 judges to provide appropriate access to justice for Riverside County residents.

Riverside County has seen a 44 percent increase in its population since 2000. Its population more than doubled between 1989 and 2012. During that same time, the number of judicial positions has increased by only 31 percent. Riverside's ratio of judicial positions per 100,000 of population is 3.5, statewide the average is 5.2. In addition, a recent study shows that the Inland Empire is on track to be the fourth fastest growing economy in the nation.

The much needed judges provided for in SB 1190 would have been a significant factor in the restoration of critical court services for Inland Empire citizens. Because of a lack of judgeships, the court in Riverside County has been forced to delay hearings, continue cases, limit hours, increase wait times, and reduce overall public services. These reductions affect all residents, but are especially critical in cases involving children, families, and the elderly.

*“It is disappointing that Californians in the Inland Empire continue to receive fewer state resources per capita than people in other areas of the state. This inequality must be addressed if all Californians are to find equal access to justice.”* remarked Presiding Judge Mark A. Cope.

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